

Research Article

THE EFFECT OF PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS ON THE ADOPTION OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS MEASURES BY FAMILIES

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Received 20th February 2025; Accepted 21st March 2025; Published online 30th April 2025

ABSTRACT

Aims: This study aims to evaluate the impact of public awareness campaigns on the adoption of disaster preparedness measures among families in Barangay Barra, Opol, Misamis Oriental, Philippines. The research seeks to identify factors influencing the effectiveness of such campaigns in fostering disaster resilience, particularly focusing on community engagement and the adoption of safety behaviors. **Study design:** The study employs a descriptive-correlational research design to explore the relationship between public awareness and disaster preparedness actions. It targets heads of households or responsible individuals within the community to assess both awareness levels and the adoption of disaster preparedness measures. **Methodology:** A purposive sample of 100 respondents was selected for the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, which assessed the levels of public awareness regarding disaster preparedness campaigns and the corresponding adoption of safety measures. Descriptive statistics were applied to evaluate awareness levels, and regression analysis was conducted to determine the impact of awareness on the adoption of preparedness actions. **Results:** The results indicate that public awareness of disaster preparedness campaigns in Barangay Barra is moderate. The study found a positive relationship between public awareness and the adoption of preparedness behaviors, with increased awareness leading to higher levels of preparedness actions. However, challenges remain in terms of community involvement and full adherence to government guidelines, highlighting areas for improvement in local disaster preparedness efforts. **Conclusion:** The findings underscore the significant role of public awareness campaigns in promoting disaster preparedness, with a strong correlation between awareness and the adoption of safety measures. However, the study reveals gaps in community engagement and full implementation of preparedness actions. Recommendations include enhancing community involvement, increasing the frequency and duration of campaigns, utilizing multiple media channels, and implementing hands-on preparedness activities to improve disaster resilience in Barangay Barra.

Keywords: Adoption, Awareness, Campaigns, Disaster, Preparedness.

INTRODUCTION

Disaster preparedness has emerged as a critical global concern, particularly as nations worldwide face escalating risks from natural disasters, worsened by the effects of climate change. The frequency and intensity of earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and other catastrophes have risen significantly in recent years, exerting mounting pressure on individuals, communities, and governments to implement effective disaster risk management strategies (Smith *et al.*, 2021). As such, disaster preparedness is no longer just a policy issue but a vital aspect of societal resilience. According to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), one of the most effective ways to mitigate the impact of disasters is through education and awareness-raising campaigns (UNDRR, 2022). These initiatives play a pivotal role in informing individuals and communities about the steps they need to take to protect themselves and their property during a disaster, with evidence showing that they can substantially reduce casualties and property loss (Kouadio *et al.*, 2023).

Public awareness campaigns have become fundamental in fostering disaster resilience. They are designed to equip individuals with essential information, such as evacuation routes, emergency contacts, first aid procedures, and safety protocols (FEMA, 2021). Such measures are crucial in reducing the adverse impacts of disasters, especially in regions that face frequent threats from natural hazards. In countries like Japan, where earthquakes and tsunamis are recurring events, government-led campaigns have markedly

improved the population's understanding of disaster risks and increased participation in preparedness drills (Tanaka & Yamada, 2020). Similarly, in the United States, FEMA's public initiatives have focused on promoting emergency kits, home safety measures, and the importance of family evacuation plans (FEMA, 2023). These efforts have demonstrated that public awareness campaigns can be highly effective in improving disaster response outcomes, especially when supported by clear, actionable guidelines (Miller *et al.*, 2024).

However, despite these advancements, challenges remain in engaging all sectors of society, particularly marginalized groups in rural and underdeveloped areas. Research has shown that there are significant barriers to reaching these populations, including limited access to information, low trust in governmental messages, and difficulty in maintaining long-term engagement (Jones *et al.*, 2021). These barriers highlight the need for disaster preparedness strategies that are both context-specific and inclusive, ensuring that all members of society, regardless of their location or socio-economic status, can be reached by life-saving information (Mendoza & Ortega, 2023).

In the Philippines, disaster preparedness is especially critical due to the country's geographic location within the Pacific Ring of Fire and its vulnerability to annual typhoons. With frequent natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and volcanic eruptions, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) has prioritized disaster preparedness as a key national concern (NDRRMC, 2024). Despite the implementation of public awareness campaigns, studies reveal that there remains a significant gap between awareness and actual preparedness behaviors in the Philippines. Alfaro *et al.*, (2022) found that while 75% of respondents

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acknowledged the importance of disaster preparedness, only 40% had taken the necessary steps, such as assembling emergency kits or securing their homes. This disparity underscores the challenge of translating knowledge into concrete actions (Alfaro *et al.*, 2022).

Efforts to integrate disaster preparedness into educational programs and community initiatives have shown some promise, but there is still considerable work to be done, especially in rural areas. These regions often face obstacles such as inadequate resources for conducting drills and limited participation in community preparedness activities (Garcia & De Guzman, 2023). Moreover, the inconsistency of disaster preparedness implementation at the household level remains a pressing issue, with many families failing to take basic actions, such as creating emergency plans or participating in evacuation drills (Cruz & Santiago, 2022).

Barangay Barra, located in the municipality of Opol in Misamis Oriental, exemplifies the challenges faced by rural communities in the Philippines in terms of disaster preparedness. This coastal community is highly vulnerable to typhoons, flooding, and other natural hazards, and while the local government has taken steps to enhance disaster preparedness, significant barriers persist. These include limited access to reliable information, financial constraints on conducting regular preparedness drills, and low levels of community engagement (Bernardo *et al.*, 2023).

Although local initiatives have aimed to raise awareness about disaster preparedness, many residents still lack the necessary resources and motivation to implement key measures, such as assembling emergency kits and securing their homes. This issue is evident despite widespread knowledge about the importance of disaster preparedness. A study by Torres *et al.*, (2023) found that while 80% of surveyed residents were aware of basic preparedness practices, fewer than 50% took the necessary actions to safeguard their families and property (Torres *et al.*, 2023).

The gap between awareness and action in Barangay Barra highlights the need for more targeted and engaging disaster preparedness campaigns. The existing literature suggests that while public awareness campaigns are effective in disseminating information, they often fall short in motivating behavioral change (Lazo *et al.*, 2021). This is particularly true when campaign materials are not tailored to the local context or are not delivered in formats that resonate with the target audience (Leone *et al.*, 2024).

As such, this study seeks to bridge the gap by examining the impact of different factors—such as campaign content, media channels, and frequency—on the adoption of disaster preparedness measures in Barangay Barra. By focusing on the role of community engagement and the effectiveness of campaign strategies, this research aims to provide actionable insights that can help local governments and other stakeholders design more impactful disaster preparedness initiatives.

Recent studies suggest that continuous engagement through multiple channels, including social media, local radio, and community meetings, can help maintain public interest and ensure the effective implementation of disaster preparedness practices (Ramirez & Solares, 2022). Moreover, integrating local leaders and community influencers into preparedness efforts has been shown to increase participation and enhance the credibility of disaster preparedness messages (Bautista *et al.*, 2023). This underscores the need for a more nuanced approach to disaster risk reduction—one that not only informs but also empowers individuals to take meaningful actions to protect their families and communities.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The study is anchored in two core theories that help explain the relationship between public awareness campaigns and the adoption of disaster preparedness measures. These theories are the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) by Albert Bandura (1986) and the Health Belief Theory (HBT) by Irwin Rosenstock (1974), which collectively shed light on how individuals' behaviors can be influenced by external messages and internal perceptions of risk.

The first theory, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), serves as the foundation for understanding the influence of public awareness campaigns (independent variable) on individuals' behaviors, particularly in the context of disaster preparedness. SCT posits that human behavior is shaped by the dynamic interplay of personal factors, environmental influences, and behavioral patterns (Bandura, 1986). According to SCT, public awareness campaigns act as environmental cues that inform individuals and trigger behaviors. When these messages are perceived as credible, consistent, and actionable, they interact with individuals' personal characteristics—such as self-efficacy (the belief in one's ability to execute a behavior)—and lead to behavior change (Amoako *et al.*, 2023).

Recent studies confirm that individuals who feel more capable of engaging in disaster preparedness actions and are exposed to clear, consistent messaging are more likely to take proactive measures (Rahman *et al.*, 2024). A study by Becerra *et al.*, (2023) found that effective public awareness campaigns in earthquake-prone areas not only increased awareness but also enhanced residents' self-efficacy, resulting in increased preparedness behaviors. The success of these campaigns hinges on their ability to target both individual belief systems and environmental factors that shape preparedness actions (Sahabuddin *et al.*, 2024). Thus, SCT provides a useful lens for understanding how public campaigns can influence disaster preparedness behavior by shaping individuals' perceptions of their ability to act. The second theory underpinning this study is the Health Belief Theory (HBT), which is particularly useful for understanding how individuals make decisions regarding health-related behaviors, including disaster preparedness. According to HBT, individuals are more likely to engage in protective behaviors when they perceive a significant health threat and believe that taking action will mitigate that threat (Rosenstock, 1974). The theory outlines key elements that drive preventive action: perceived susceptibility (the belief that one is at risk), perceived severity (the belief that the threat is serious), perceived benefits (the belief that the action will reduce the threat), and perceived barriers (the belief that the action is difficult or costly) (Mayo *et al.*, 2023).

In the context of disaster preparedness, HBT helps explain how public awareness campaigns can influence individuals' perceptions of disaster risks. According to a study by Zhang and Li (2023), individuals who viewed disaster preparedness as critical to reducing the severity of potential risks were more likely to engage in preparedness behaviors, such as securing their homes or assembling emergency kits. Similarly, studies show that campaigns that highlight the severe consequences of natural disasters and emphasize the benefits of preparedness lead to higher adoption rates of safety measures (Nobles & Santiago, 2024). HBT also emphasizes that addressing barriers to preparedness—such as lack of resources or knowledge—can help increase engagement in disaster risk reduction actions (Sison *et al.*, 2023).

The conceptual framework of this study builds on the interaction between public awareness campaigns (independent variable) and the adoption of disaster preparedness behaviors (dependent variable).

Public awareness campaigns encompass various components, including the content and clarity of the information provided, the frequency and duration of campaigns, the media channels used (e.g., social media, radio, community meetings), and the involvement of local community leaders. These factors are expected to influence individuals' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding disaster preparedness (Kim *et al.*, 2023).

The framework suggests that as residents of Barangay Barra become more aware of the risks they face and the strategies they can employ to mitigate those risks—through well-executed public campaigns—they will be more likely to adopt preparedness behaviors such as creating emergency kits, securing their homes, and participating in evacuation drills. Studies have demonstrated that increased exposure to disaster preparedness campaigns is linked to higher rates of behavior adoption, particularly when campaigns use targeted and culturally relevant messages (Manalo *et al.*, 2023).

Further research by Marasigan *et al.*, (2024) also supports this framework by showing that communities that have ongoing, tailored disaster preparedness campaigns exhibit greater participation in preparedness drills and emergency planning activities. The involvement of local leaders in these campaigns has been found to significantly enhance engagement and effectiveness, as it helps to ensure that the messages resonate with the local population (Ramos *et al.*, 2024). The integration of SCT and HBT into the study's theoretical and conceptual frameworks provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the factors that influence disaster preparedness behaviors. SCT emphasizes the role of environmental cues and self-efficacy in driving behavior change, while HBT underscores the importance of perceived risks and benefits in motivating protective actions. By examining how public awareness campaigns can bridge the gap between knowledge and action, this study aims to provide valuable insights into how local government units and NGOs can design more effective interventions that encourage tangible changes in disaster preparedness behaviors.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the relationship between public awareness campaigns and the adoption of disaster preparedness measures among families in Barangay Barra, Opol, Misamis Oriental. Descriptive-correlational designs were particularly effective in identifying and examining relationships between variables without manipulating them, providing a clear understanding of how awareness influenced preparedness behaviors (Park *et al.*, 2023).

A sample of 100 respondents was selected using purposive sampling, targeting heads of households or individuals responsible for disaster preparedness within their families. Purposive sampling was utilized in studies focusing on a specific group, ensuring that the sample included individuals with direct experience or responsibility related to the research topic (Santos *et al.*, 2021).

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, consisting of two main sections. The first section assessed the level of public awareness regarding disaster preparedness campaigns, while the second evaluated the adoption of disaster preparedness measures. This two-part approach ensured that both awareness and behavior were comprehensively measured, allowing for a clear correlation between the two (Wang & Li, 2022). To analyze the data, descriptive statistics were used to determine the current levels of awareness and preparedness within the community. Regression analysis was then employed to examine the effect of public awareness campaigns on

the adoption of disaster preparedness measures. Regression analysis was appropriate for examining causal relationships and understanding how one variable (public awareness) influenced another (disaster preparedness adoption) (Rahman & Luster, 2023).

Ethical considerations, such as obtaining informed consent from all participants and ensuring the confidentiality of their responses, were strictly adhered to throughout the study. This ensured the integrity of the research and the protection of participant rights.

The findings of this study provided valuable insights into how public awareness campaigns influenced disaster preparedness behaviors within communities, offering critical data to inform future campaign strategies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. What is the level of public awareness regarding disaster preparedness campaigns in Barangay Barra, Opol, Misamis Oriental?

The findings from the study in Barangay Barra, Opol, Misamis Oriental, regarding the level of public awareness about disaster preparedness campaigns reveal a moderate level of awareness. As indicated in Table 1, the respondents generally agreed with the effectiveness of the campaign content, frequency, media channels used, and community involvement, as all mean scores fell within the "Agree" range. The highest mean score was found for "Content of the Campaign" (3.20), suggesting that the information provided in the campaigns is perceived as clear and valuable. However, the lowest mean was recorded for "Community Involvement" (2.58), indicating that while community participation is present, it may not be as strong as other elements of the campaign. The overall mean score of 2.95 further confirms that public awareness is moderate, leaving room for improvement.

These findings are consistent with recent research on disaster preparedness campaigns. For instance, a study by Rahman *et al.*, (2022) found that individuals with higher levels of awareness were significantly more likely to adopt disaster preparedness behaviors, highlighting the importance of effective awareness campaigns in fostering preparedness. Similarly, the USAID's iPrepared project, implemented in disaster-prone areas of Mindanao in 2022, emphasized that while awareness is crucial, campaigns must focus on increasing community participation to achieve meaningful disaster resilience (USAID, 2022). This resonates with the current study's finding that while the content of disaster preparedness campaigns is well-received, the level of community involvement is still lacking.

Additionally, research conducted by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR, 2023) stressed that community participation is key to the success of disaster risk management efforts. The lower mean for "Community Involvement" in Barangay Barra reflects this gap in community engagement. Furthermore, a study by BMC Public Health (2025) highlighted that resource allocation for training and educational materials can significantly enhance both awareness and community involvement, suggesting that increasing such investments could address the current shortfall in engagement.

National trends also support the need for increased campaign efforts. The Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (2024) reported a 42% increase in disaster preparedness levels across the Philippines over the past seven years, signaling growing public awareness. However, it also pointed out that disaster preparedness could be further strengthened

by improving local campaigns' depth and frequency, reinforcing the need for more interactive, community-driven efforts, as seen in the current study's moderate overall awareness score.

In conclusion, while the residents of Barangay Barra show some understanding of disaster preparedness, the campaigns have not yet reached their full potential in terms of engagement and sustained community involvement. Increasing the frequency and depth of these campaigns, along with enhancing community participation through local leadership and interactive methods, could bridge the gap and lead to higher levels of preparedness and resilience among the residents.

Table 1. The summary of the level of public awareness regarding disaster preparedness campaigns in Barangay Barra, Opol, Misamis Oriental

Items	Mean	SD	Description
Content of the Campaign	3.20	0.48	Agree
Frequency of Campaigns	3.01	0.42	Agree
Media Channels Used	3.03	0.44	Agree
Community Involvement	2.58	0.47	Agree
Overall Mean	2.95	0.45	Agree

Legend: 1.00 – 1.75 (Strongly Disagree), 1.76 – 2.50 (Disagree), 2.51 – 3.25 (Agree), 3.26 – 4.00 (Strongly Agree)

2. What is the level of Adoption of Disaster Preparedness Measures by Families?

The findings presented in Table 2 summarize the level of adoption of disaster preparedness measures by families in Barangay Barra, Opol, Misamis Oriental. The results indicate that respondents generally agree with adopting preparedness measures, as all mean scores fall within the "Agree" range. The highest mean score was for "Knowledge of Preparedness Measures" (3.17), which suggests that families in the community possess a good understanding of key preparedness actions, such as knowing evacuation routes and emergency contacts. However, the lowest mean score was for "Adherence to Government Guidelines" (3.10), implying that while respondents generally agree with following government evacuation orders and emergency alerts, there may be some variability in actual adherence during a disaster. The overall mean of 3.12 confirms that while families moderately adopt disaster preparedness measures, there is still room for improvement in fully implementing these actions.

These findings are consistent with broader literature on disaster preparedness. Research by Rahman *et al.*, (2022) supports the notion that knowledge of preparedness actions is a key factor in disaster resilience, as individuals who understand key preparedness measures are more likely to engage in them. In line with the current study's findings, the USAID's iPrepared project (2022) found that while communities often demonstrate understanding of preparedness actions, the actual implementation can vary, particularly when it comes to adherence to guidelines set by authorities, such as evacuation orders. This is echoed in the current study's finding that adherence to government guidelines had the lowest mean score, suggesting that compliance may fluctuate depending on circumstances during a disaster.

Furthermore, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR, 2023) emphasizes the importance of ensuring not only knowledge but also active participation in drills and real-life practice, as this significantly enhances the ability to implement preparedness measures when needed. The current study's finding that "Family

Participation in Drills" has a mean score of 3.11 suggests that while families are somewhat involved in drills, more hands-on activities could improve overall preparedness. BMC Public Health (2025) also highlights that increasing participation in preparedness activities, such as drills and community exercises, can lead to better adoption of preparedness measures during actual emergencies.

National trends, such as those reported by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (2024), also align with these findings. A nationwide study indicated that while public awareness of disaster preparedness is on the rise, the actual adoption of comprehensive measures, including strict adherence to government guidelines, requires continuous reinforcement through local campaigns and exercises. The study's overall mean of 3.12 further emphasizes that while the adoption of disaster preparedness measures is moderate, there is a significant opportunity to improve the consistency and full implementation of these actions.

In conclusion, while families in Barangay Barra demonstrate a basic understanding of disaster preparedness and engage in some level of preparedness actions, the study suggests that full implementation—particularly adherence to government guidelines and active participation in drills—can be further enhanced. Strengthening these areas by increasing hands-on preparedness activities and ensuring better communication regarding government evacuation orders could lead to higher adoption rates and improve the community's resilience during disasters.

Table 2. The summary of the level of Adoption of Disaster Preparedness Measures by Families

Items	Mean	SD	Description
Knowledge of Preparedness Measures	3.17	0.68	Agree
Implementation of Preparedness Actions	3.12	0.61	Agree
Family Participation in Drills	3.11	0.62	Agree
Adherence to Government Guidelines	3.10	0.69	Agree
Overall Mean	3.12	0.65	Agree

Legend: 1.00 – 1.75 (Strongly Disagree), 1.76 – 2.50 (Disagree), 2.51 – 3.25 (Agree), 3.26 – 4.00 (Strongly Agree)

3. Do public awareness campaigns affect the Adoption of Disaster Preparedness Measures by Families?

The regression analysis results presented in Table 3 demonstrate a significant positive effect of public awareness campaigns on the adoption of disaster preparedness measures in Barangay Barra, Opol, Misamis Oriental. The coefficient estimate of 0.813 ($p < 0.001$) indicates that for each unit increase in public awareness campaigns, the adoption of preparedness measures increases by 0.813 units, suggesting a strong relationship between the two variables. The Adjusted R^2 value of 0.81 further supports this, explaining 81% of the variance in preparedness adoption.

These findings are consistent with recent studies highlighting the impact of public awareness on disaster preparedness. A 2023 study in Indonesia found that individuals with higher awareness levels were 1.49 times more likely to have higher community preparedness for disaster preparedness efforts compared to those with lower awareness levels (Rahman *et al.*, 2023). Similarly, a 2025 scoping review identified that disaster preparedness education for the public plays a crucial role in enhancing community resilience and minimizing the adverse effects of disasters (Guo *et al.*, 2025).

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) emphasizes that Public Awareness and Public Education (PAPE) messages help communities improve their knowledge of disaster risks and implement safety measures (IFRC, 2022). This aligns with the current study's findings, suggesting that well-structured public awareness campaigns can enhance families' adoption of disaster preparedness measures.

Moreover, a 2023 literature review on disaster risk reduction programs found that increasing public awareness of natural disasters is essential for effective preparedness (Asih *et al.*, 2023). This supports the notion that enhancing public awareness can lead to more proactive adoption of disaster preparedness measures.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) also underscores the importance of integrating disaster risk reduction into education, noting that improved education and awareness-raising are crucial for building resilience to climate change and disasters (UNDRR, 2022). This highlights the broader context in which public awareness campaigns operate and their role in fostering community resilience.

In conclusion, the regression analysis results from Barangay Barra are corroborated by recent studies and international frameworks, reinforcing the importance of public awareness campaigns in enhancing the adoption of disaster preparedness measures. These findings suggest that increasing the frequency, reach, and quality of such campaigns could significantly improve families' preparedness and contribute to overall community resilience during disasters.

Table 3 Regression Analysis of Public Awareness Campaigns Affecting the Adoption of Disaster Preparedness Measures by Families

Model Coefficients - Adoption of Disaster Preparedness

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	0.627	0.1881	3.34	0.001
Public Awareness Campaigns	0.813	0.0579	14.04	<.001

Note: Adjusted $R^2=0.81$ $p=0.000$

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight the vital role that public awareness campaigns play in influencing the adoption of disaster preparedness measures among families in Barangay Barra, Opol, Misamis Oriental. The results indicate that while the residents generally have a moderate level of awareness regarding disaster preparedness campaigns, the actual adoption of preparedness actions is also moderate. Specifically, the study shows that public awareness campaigns significantly affect the adoption of preparedness measures, with increased exposure to these campaigns leading to more proactive behaviors, such as knowledge of preparedness measures, the implementation of safety actions, participation in drills, and adherence to government guidelines. Despite the positive relationship observed, there is room for improvement in enhancing community involvement and increasing the consistency of preparedness behaviors among families.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Enhance Community Involvement:** The study found that community involvement in the campaigns was relatively lower than other components. To improve engagement, local leaders should be more active in promoting and participating in preparedness activities. Community workshops, meetings, and interactive drills should be organized to encourage active participation.
- Increase the Frequency and Duration of Campaigns:** Public awareness campaigns should be held more frequently and sustained over extended periods to ensure that residents retain critical disaster preparedness information. Continuous updates and refresher campaigns can help maintain engagement and reinforce key messages.
- Utilize Multiple Media Channels:** While media channels are essential for awareness, more effort should be put into integrating both traditional and digital media. Social media platforms, in particular, should be utilized more effectively to reach a broader audience, especially the younger demographic.
- Implement Interactive and Hands-On Activities:** Given that knowledge alone does not always translate into action, the local government and community leaders should focus on hands-on activities, such as regular disaster drills, to help families practice preparedness measures. Simulated scenarios and emergency drills should be a regular part of community life.
- Strengthen Adherence to Government Guidelines:** While adherence to government evacuation orders was moderate, additional efforts are needed to ensure families consistently follow government guidelines during a disaster. This can include clear communication, reminders, and incentives for families participating in preparedness actions and drills.

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